REMARKS:

In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks please reconsider the amended claims.

In amending the claims, independent claim 1 has been amended and new independent claims 21 and 25 have been added in order to distinguish the invention from the prior art. Previously submitted claims 14 through 20 have been cancelled and five new claims have been added so that the total number of claims remains less than 20 and accordingly no additional claims fees are required.

Claim 1 has been amended to more positively recite that the support receiver is fixedly maintained by the frame in both the floor mounted and wall mounted positions relative to the frame. This configuration is both distinguished from the prior art and particularly advantageous in that consumers can now use their existing hitch accessories, including bike racks and the like in a storage configuration in both floor and wall mounted positions depending upon the space available to the user to increase the usefulness of the hitch accessory which otherwise is only useful on a vehicle. No other prior art device allows use of known hitch accessories to be supported in a fixed orientation in both floor and wall mounted positions for selected use by an end user.

The examiner's only previous basis for rejecting claim 1 was US publication 2002/0017770 to Parrish which discloses a receptacle for storing various hitch accessories therein. The device includes a mounting plate which acts as a planar frame upon which a receiver is supported. In most embodiments the receiver is fixed in a single orientation oriented perpendicular to the mounting plate, however in one embodiment the receiver is pivotal through a range of orientations. The receiver however appears to be pivotal only for increased accessibility as no support whatsoever is provided to maintain the receiver in a selected orientation, for example

a floor mounted or wall mounted position as defined in the current claim 1. Accordingly the fixed mounted embodiment of Parrish is limited to only wall mounting configurations while the pivotal configuration is not useful for either position as the free pivotal movement of the receiver relative to the mounting plate would not provide sufficient support to maintain a hitch accessory in a useful storing position.

With regard to securement of the receiver in two positions as further defined in claim 2, the examiner only previously cited US 2,872,213 to Hosford in combination with Parrish noted above. The device of Hosford however discloses only a support member upon which a pair of hitch balls are mounted in which the support member can be anchored in two positions depending upon the desired hitch ball to be used. The two different orientations however are parallel to one another and rely on the same mounting aperture on the support frame which is not planar, and accordingly Hosford does not appear to be particularly relevant to the present invention. Even when combined, neither Parrish nor Hosford disclose any form of a receiver which can be fixedly maintained in both a parallel and a perpendicular configuration relative to a generally planar frame upon which the receiver is mounted. These features are essential for providing a support device for supporting a hitch accessory in either a floor mounted or a wall mounted position as selected by a user. It is respectfully submitted therefore that claim 1 is clearly distinguished from the prior art when considered alone or in combination by fixedly maintaining the receiver in floor and wall mounted positions and accordingly claim 1 should now be in condition for allowance.

New independent claim 21 includes all of the features of claim 1 noted above along with the additional limitation that the frame extends in a longitudinal direction between ends and that the support receiver is supported at one end so that an open end faces the opposing end of the frame in the floor mounted position. By

providing an elongate frame with the orientation of the support receiver extending inwardly from one end thereof, conventional hitch accessories such as bike racks and the like which support loads thereon in a cantilevered configuration, can be supported on the support device according to the present invention without the additional use of fasteners and the like being required. Any of the examiner's cited references with regard to receivers for a hitch type accessory require mounting apertures and the use of fasteners for anchoring to a supporting surface in order to support a cantilevered type hitch accessory therein. Accordingly it is respectfully submitted that claim 21 is also distinguished from the prior art and should now be in condition for allowance.

New claim 25 comprises a support device in combination with a pair of wall hangers as described in previously submitted dependent claim 8. Claim 25 includes the additional limitations that the frame comprise a cross support member which is oriented to span horizontally between the hooks of the spaced apart hangers supported on a wall at a common height so that the receiver which is perpendicular to the plane of the frame in the wall mounted position is suitably arranged to be suspended by the hangers and projects outwardly from the wall to receive the hitch accessories therein. This configuration is particularly advantageous as the device can be released from the wall mounted position simply by releasing the cross support member from the hangers rather than requiring removal of fasteners as in the prior art. The receiver of the support device can thus be readily supported on a wall or returned to storage when not in use as desired by a user without time consuming anchoring using threaded fasteners and the like. None of the examiner's prior art references disclose any form of a receiver which is mounted perpendicularly to a support frame having a cross support member carried horizontally across hangers on an upright wall and accordingly it is respectfully submitted that claim 25 should now also be in condition for allowance.

Claim 3 has been amended to refer to a dimension instead of a diameter to overcome the examiner's objection in this regard.

Favorable reconsideration of this application is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted
Ian Norquay

PER:
Ryan W. Dupuis
Registration 47,345

RWD/hk
March 15, 2006
Ryan W. Dupuis

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
Telephone (204) 944-0062 - FAX (204) 942-5723

CERTIFICATION OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this paper is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Fax No. (571) 273-8300, on March 15, 2006

Heather Kirkpatrick